

Local radio has been overtaken by big corporations like ?Clear Channel Communications? to such a level that there is no point to listen to them any longer. It's all about big money. The formats change from day to day, the announcers are out in BFE and really don?t care about anything but their paycheck. The ?news and weather? is so stale that it reminds me of a garbage dump on a hot, humid day.

I, for one, was a nay-sayer about paying for satellite radio, but I now have 3 XM units that I listen to any time I?m in the cars or at home. Local radio is all but dead for any worthwhile local information. The quality, lack of fading and instant information has won me over from my former local alliances.

For instance, one local mega owner has 5 of the 7 AM/FM stations available in our area. They are anything but ?local? radio any longer. Less than 4 hours of real, down to earth, live programming each day and even less on weekends. Nothing at night is live.

I had already given up on them a couple of years before I bought my first XM. Even with a box full of CD?s in the car, it was a pain to keep them going. XM has put no telling how many hours back on my car radios. The CD?s are back at home.

When traveling, I rely on my XM to keep me posted on traffic and weather as well as entertainment as I travel. I take my Roady with me and use it in whatever rental car I have and even use it in my hotel room with the sound card in my laptop. XM is like a very comfortable pair of boots. Great to have ? won?t give up until there is absolutely no life left in them.

If the NAB and its affiliated stations really want to compete, then they need to COMPETE, not suppress valid competition. They need to get off their collective rears and give radio back to the local listeners and then they would not have to worry about the ?new? kids on the block stealing their listeners. But, until then, it?s XM all the way for me.

Maybe the NAB is worried because the real numbers can be counted by subscriptions to satellite radio services, something that is only a guestimate with AM & FM stations. As XM recently crossed the one million and now approaching a million and a half, I don?t see that to be a real challenge to over-the-air broadcasters or advertisers ? not yet, at least.

I applaud XM for removing advertising from over 60 of their music channels since the first of 2004. All of which makes XM even more appreciated. Normal AM & FM has way too much advertising and way too little real information or music the last few years.